

Committee

Members Present

Mary Durham, *Council Chair*

Maverick Crawford

Andrew Crim

Ivy Goldstein, *DSHS*

Juan Carlos Lopez

Scott McAvoy

Amanda Miles

Holly Riley, *HHSC Older Americans Act of 1965*

Robert Schier III

Meridith Silcox

Jamie Thomas

Committee

Members Absent

Gladys Cortez,
Committee Chair

Justin Porter, *TEA*

Jonas Schwartz, *TWC*

Guests Present

Stefan Cole

Crysta Colmer

Mario Contreras

Brooke Hohfeld

Lauryn McNeil

Ara Merjanian

John Nicks

Deborah Wallace

Regional

Coordinators

Present

Erin Fogarty

Morgan Foster

Rosa Guel

Canen Melton

Skylar Mueller

Alexandra Venegas

Staff Present

Beth Stalvey, *Executive Director*

Mitchel Griffin

Crystal Goodwin

Genessee Klemm

Evan Marczynski

Sylvia Medina

Richard Rendon

Cass Schnautz

Melanie Teague

Rey Valldejul

Call to Order

The Project Development Committee of the Texas Council for Developmental convened on Thursday, August 3, 2023, at the Royal Sonesta Houston Galleria, 2222 W Loop S, Houston, Texas, 77027 as well as virtually using the Zoom platform. Scott McAvoy called the meeting to order at 1:31 pm. A quorum was present.

1. Introductions

Committee members, staff and guests were introduced.

2. Public Comments

Stefan Cole, Parent, Self-Advocate and Board Member of Texas Parent to Parent, spoke about services needed in rural areas of Texas.

Project Development Cont.

Committee Meeting Minutes

August 3, 2023

3. Consideration of Minutes

The minutes were reviewed, and no corrections or additions were noted.

MOTION: To approve the minutes of the May 4, 2023, Project Development Committee meeting as presented.

MADE BY: Robert Schier III

SECOND: Jamie Thomas

The motion **passed** unanimously. (August 2023 Meeting Materials, Tab 8)

4. Chair's Remarks

Vice Chair McAvoy reported the expected absences of Committee Chair Gladys Cortez, Justin Porter from TEA, and Jonas Schwartz from TWC.

Meridith Silcox reviewed the Executive Committee decision to award continuation grant funding to seven projects and discussed the available funding for projects. Members did not have further questions.

5. Members Quarterly Activities

Committee members shared their updates on their disability-related activities during the previous quarter.

6. Staff Reports

Finance and Grants Director Rey Valldejuli reviewed new grants, the risk assessment report and the state plan. Valldejuli reported the start of one new grant during the quarter, from Rice University, entitled Building Strength in the Face of Loss for Families with IDD. He also discussed projects ending this quarter and projects ending this year. Valldejuli then discussed the risk assessment report and noted the grants that have been elevated to moderate or high risk due to late documentation. Valldejuli noted that the risk assessment is not a direct reflection of the projects' activities, but staff are monitoring documentation requirements. Members were directed to the graphic depicting all the grant projects based on their goals and objectives aligned with our state plan.

7. Presentation: Texas Advocates

Ara Merjanian led a presentation on a grant-funded initiative aimed at crafting a comprehensive plan for Texas Advocates. Merjanian was joined by Texas Advocates co-directors Brooke Hohfeld and Deborah Wallace who discussed their work on both short and long-term goals across multiple aspects of Texas Advocates' operations. Key stakeholders such as disability organization representatives, self-advocates, and advisors actively contributed to the project's evolution. The involvement of the Governor's Center for Management Development at the LBJ School of Public Affairs at UT was noted, with Merjanian as the lead facilitator. The project underwent three phases including: strategic plan development, elaboration through working groups, and positioning for implementation.

Hohfeld and Wallace's contributions were recognized by Merjanian for their pivotal role in facilitating workshops and ensuring inclusive representation. These workshops enabled the collection of insights, goals, and strategies related to the project's focal points. The strategic plan, accompanied by a newly formulated value statement, received formal approval from the Texas Advocates Board. Hohfeld shared valuable lessons from the project, including the feasibility of implementing many suggestions, the complexity of addressing certain issues like transportation, the impact of an aging chapter population on diversity and technology access, the involvement of young individuals and self-advocates in strategic planning, the necessity for more in-person interactions to mend COVID-19-induced social skills gaps, and the unexpected importance of etiquette during the shift from virtual to in-person meetings. The presentation also highlighted the success of an inclusive conference and the pressing need for robust chapter governance, financial stability, and operational excellence. Hohfeld emphasized the initiatives targeting youth involvement and communication enhancement. The finalized plan is slated for presentation, review, and approval by the Texas Advocates Board in their October meeting.

Project Development Cont.

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8. Future Activities for State Plan Implementation

McAvoy discussed DD Act mandates to support statewide self-advocacy networks and referenced a new state plan project executive summary.

MOTION: To recommend Council approval of the new state plan project executive summary on Capacity Building Support for Statewide Self-Advocacy Networks.

MADE BY: Andrew Crim

SECOND: Maverick Crawford

The motion **passed** unanimously. (August Meeting Materials, Tab 9)

Rosa Guel, South Texas Regional Coordinator, discussed employment as it relates to our targeted disparity and increasing opportunities for employment for early-career adult Texans with DD of Hispanic origin who live in the deep south area of Texas through outreach, training, and inter-agency communication post-transition.

Members had additional discussion on the potential for TCDD initiatives on inclusive childcare geared towards older children with IDD.

9. Future Project Funding Priorities

The Committee evaluated the Future Funding Priorities List. Members reviewed the list as provided by staff and removed projects that have been initiated.

MOTION: Recommend Council approval of the Future Funding Priorities List as follows:

1. Culturally Competent Family Supports
2. Capacity Building for Statewide Self-Advocacy Groups
3. TCDD Storytelling Projects
4. Medical Self-Advocacy
5. Prevention and Response to Sexual Offenses – Medical and Therapeutic Professionals
6. Prevention and Response to Sexual Offenses – Criminal Justice Response to Cases Involving People with I/DD

Project Development Cont.

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MADE BY: Andrew Crim

SECOND: Jamie Thomas

The motion **passed** unanimously. (Future Project Funding Priorities, Tab 10)

10. Future Agenda Items

Members requested future discussion topics to include funding for future projects.

11. Other Discussion Items

Members requested a presentation on inclusive childcare. The next Committee meeting will be held in conjunction with the next Council and Committee meetings scheduled for November 2, 2023.

Adjourn

Scott McAvoy adjourned the Project Development Committee meeting at 4:46 p.m.

Beth Stalvey, *Secretary to the Council* Date